

**REPORT OF THE AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT CLUSTER (AFSRDC)**

**Highlights of Inter-Agency Collaborative Activities in Support of  
NEPAD/AU  
Under the  
Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM)**

**(November 2008-October 2009)**

**Addis Ababa, November 2009**

## **Introduction**

The 9th RCM meeting recommended preparation of a cluster work plan and a reporting format. However, these and several other recommendations are still in the process of being developed, with the main challenge being lack of human and financial resources. Furthermore, low attendance at cluster meetings has rendered attainment of working quorums elusive and slowed down the process of deliberation and implementation of key issues. Consequently, this report is based on the cluster meetings held during the reporting period and some key activities implemented with the collaboration of two or more cluster members in support of the AU/NEPAD's agriculture, food security and rural development agenda. However, some cluster members did not provide information on their collaborative activities and the report may not be complete.

### **1. Cluster Meetings**

The cluster convened three meetings: a brainstorming meeting held in Tripoli, Libya on 28th June 2009 on the sidelines of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development (CAADP)-Day, which itself was organized as a side event of the 13<sup>th</sup> AU Heads of State and Government Summit in Sirte, Libya, a second meeting held in Addis Ababa, on 22 September 2009 and the third was held on 4 November; a day before the commencement of the 10 RCM meeting. Highlights of the first and second meetings are summarized below.

- **The Role of the AFSRD Cluster in view of other Coordination Mechanisms**

Concern was expressed at the low attendance in cluster meetings. The absence of the two continental institutions - NEPAD and the Rural Economy and Agriculture Department (DREA) of the AU Commission - was of particular concern, given that the ultimate objective of the UN Cluster system, in the framework of the RCM, is to provide coordinated and effective UN support to these two continental bodies and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in their efforts to advance food security and agriculture development agenda in Africa. This situation is believed to be partly due to the existence of several other coordinating mechanisms with similar tasks as the African Agriculture Food Security and Rural Development Cluster (AFSRDC).

The meeting cited and discussed the CAADP/Partnership Platform (CAADP/PP), CAADP Task Team of the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD), Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Africa Working Group, and the High Level Task Force (HLTF) as examples of coordination mechanisms, all which aim at providing a coordinated and effective support by development partners to NEPAD and the African Union Commission, and, in that light, deliberated on the rationale of having a cluster activity plan other than the work plans championed by the continental organizations themselves. However, while recognizing the existence of parallel mechanisms, the meeting was reminded that the RCM is a decision of the UN General Assembly, and therefore, UN agencies have the obligation to ensure its effectiveness through the efficient functioning of the cluster system.

- **Identification of strategic AFSRDC activities and the required resources**

It was noted that some AFSRDC member agencies are already collaborating in the implementation of a number of food security and agriculture development initiatives and agreed that what is needed is to undertake a mapping exercise of such collaborative activities with a view to identifying and replicating more of them. In this regard, the meeting agreed that participants should mobilize support within their respective organizations to collaborate in the implementation of the following three areas: (i) promotion of agro-industry and agribusiness development in African countries with emphasis on Regional Value

Chain Approach<sup>1</sup>; (ii) Sustainable land and water resources management in view of climate change - an area in which AfDB and FAO have in particular collaborated in the past; and (iii) undertaking the studies requested by NEPAD and/or DREA such as the fertilizer subsidy programme in Africa.

Furthermore, the meeting agreed on the following specific actions by the Cluster before the end of the year: (i) discuss with NEPAD and DREA their strategic and annual work plans with the view to agreeing on few concrete activities which the continental bodies consider are better handled by AFSRDC; (ii) agree between the cluster members and the continental institutions on the methodologies and schedule for the implementation of the activities; (iii) identify the resources required for their implementation and agree on a strategy for its mobilization; (iv) ensure that the activities are known and mainstreamed into the global CAADP coordination mechanism; and (v) organize, to the extent possible, AFSRDC meetings on the margins of bigger events that involve many cluster members to reduce costs and ensure better attendance.

- **Cluster report 2008/2009**

The meeting discussed the preparation of the Cluster report for the current reporting period and agreed that as in the past, and in considering the lack of a Cluster work plan, this year's report will be based on integrating reports submitted by individual members on activities they have implemented in collaboration with one or more members of the Cluster.

- **Designation of Cluster Convener and Co-Convener**

The meeting discussed the recommendation of the 9th RCM regarding the designation of a Cluster Convener and Co-Convener (4.2), and underlined the fact that AFSRDC already has a Convener- FAO and Deputy-Convener - IFAD. However, further discussion on the efficiency of the current governance structure was deferred, as the meeting did not have the required quorum to take decisions that would entail altering it. It was agreed that this subject be reviewed (by the cluster) at the earliest opportune moment in the near future.

## **2. Key Collaborative Activities Involving Cluster Members**

### **2.1 High Level Expert Meeting jointly organised by the League of Arab States and the African Union; Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; 8-12 November 2008.**

FAO and WFP were key partners in providing inputs for this meeting. FAO was especially invited to deliver a paper on the evolution of food crisis and measures taken to face the volatility of food prices in African countries. FAO responded positively and prepared and presented the paper during the meeting that highlighted possible areas for joint Afro-Arab cooperation to achieve sustainable agricultural development and food security in the two areas.

**Outcome:** The effects and concrete outcomes of the cooperation are yet to be demonstrated. However, their significance in terms of advocacy work and as a conduit for channelling development assistance from the private sector such as the Gates Foundation is becoming quite evident. The Expert meeting report will be presented to the Ministers of Agriculture of the LAS and the Executive Council of the AUC for their endorsement during the Joint Afro-Arab Ministerial meeting that was expected to be held before the end of this year.

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<sup>1</sup> A meeting on the subject was held in July 2009 and a number of cluster members – ECA, FAO, WFP, IFAD, UNIDO and AUC took part. Further collaborative work in this area is needed in line with the recommendation of the Abuja Food Security Summit (2006).

## **2.2 Ministerial Conference on Water for Agriculture and Energy in Africa: the Challenges of Climate Change; Sirte, Libya; 15-17 December 2008**

FAO, the World Bank and the African Development Bank were among organizations that joined with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal and Marine Wealth of Libya, the African Union and NEPAD, in organizing the above conference which was attended by over 400 participants.

The Conference had four themes: (i) agriculture-energy nexus in Africa; (ii) investment in water for agriculture and energy; (iii) climate change and agriculture in Africa; and (iv) inter- and intra-basin cooperation in water and energy transfer. The discussions were based on technical papers prepared by FAO technical units and other partners and took into account the declarations or initiatives made in the conferences held before on the same or related subjects such as the Abuja summits<sup>2</sup>.

Four parallel events were organised on the margins of the conference covering the following topics: (1) AfDB Strategic Approach on Water for Agriculture and Energy; (2) Food Crisis in the States of CEN-SAD (Community of Sahel-Saharan States): Emergency Actions and Sustainable Perspectives; (3) AgWA (Agriculture Water Partnership): A New Partnership for Agricultural Water in Africa; and (4) ADEA (Association for the Development of Energy in Africa): Technology transfer in water and energy sectors in Africa.

**Outcome:** The conference ended with a final declaration of twenty-one recommendations on enhancement of agriculture through water resources management and improvement of the energy sector in Africa. The declaration also mentioned various initiatives regarding overall agriculture development, particularly the need to accelerate the implementation of CAADP Pillar 1. The Cluster has in this respect been requested to establish, with input from FAO, an information network in the field of agricultural production for food security and the trading of commodities between markets and countries. The Action plan and mechanism for implementation are under elaboration by FAO.

## **2.3 High Level Meeting on Food Security for All; Madrid, Spain; 26-27 January 2009**

FAO, IFAD and WFP were among the key organizations that provided vital technical inputs at the above meeting which was hosted by the Government of Spain and the United Nations in compliance with the commitments made during the meeting on “*High Level Conference on World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy*” held in Rome from 3 to 5 June 2008. The Conference was convened by FAO, in collaboration with IFAD and WFP.

The main objectives of the Meeting were to: (i) review the progress made since the June High Level Conference; (ii) agree on the future priorities, for immediate actions and the results it brings as well as medium and longer term actions and outcomes; and (iii) commit to pursuing these actions and outcomes with a view to achieving the Millennium Development Goal for the reduction of poverty and hunger. More than 126 countries participated at the meeting with attendance that included the Spanish Prime Minister, UN Secretary-General, 60 ministers, and

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<sup>2</sup> Africa Fertilizer Summit, 13 June 2006, Abuja, Nigeria and Summit on Food Security in Africa, 4-7, 2006 December, Abuja,

other key players involved in the Global Campaign in response to the immediate food emergency needs around the world.

**Outcome:** The meeting resulted in a final declaration which includes: (i) consensus that the way forward needs to link activities to reduce hunger, improve food and nutrition security, broaden social protection, improve agricultural production and stimulate trade in a fair way – as envisaged in the Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA); (ii) agreement on the need to mobilize additional resources for food security in poor countries, and to coordinate their use in a better way; (iii) consensus on the value of partnerships to promote food security that are broad-based and inclusive, involving civil society and the private sector at national, regional and global levels. The High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis will ensure the implementation of recommendations adopted.

#### **2.4 Assisting NEPAD and African Union in tracking agriculture expenditure in the context of meeting the Maputo 10% budgetary allocation**

FAO with financial contribution from the World Bank supported NEPAD Secretariat to conduct a survey on public expenditure in support of the food and agriculture sector in line with the commitment they have made in Maputo in 2003. The objective of the survey was to assess progress made by countries in complying with the declaration after 5 years since the Maputo declaration. The report of the survey was discussed in a workshop that was organized at the beginning of December 2008. The workshop also deliberated on the next steps in terms of advocacy work and technical assistance requirements of NEPAD and AUC in tracking national budgetary allocation for food security and agriculture development.

**Outcome:** The report showed that most countries surveyed have spent much less than 10% of the national expenditure on agricultural development in the last five years (only 19 per cent have reached this target). The report also mentioned the serious challenges NEPAD is facing in collecting information as well as the poor quality of data obtained, and identified a number of key constraints linked to the failure of African countries to comply with the Maputo decision on 10 percent. Nonetheless, it has been noted that despite the failure to achieve the 10 percent target, most of the countries who have responded have made tangible stride forward in terms of increasing resource allocation to agriculture development.

#### **2.5 Follow-up of the recommendations adopted by TICAD IV**

It is recalled that key Cluster members, notably FAO, WFP, IFAD, World Bank and UNDP were very active partners of the Government of Japan (GOJ) in the organization of the Fourth Tokyo International Conference for African Development (TICAD-IV) that was held in May 2008. The Cluster members continued their cooperation with GOJ in monitoring the implementation of its Action Plan. In this context FAO and WFP were among the participants of a follow-up meeting held in Gaborone, Botswana, on 21 and 22 March 2009, attended by delegations of Japan, African countries, international and regional organizations, private sector and civil society. In addition to the TICAD agenda, the meeting also discussed the possible impact of the global financial crisis and economic downturn on the African economy and agreed to convey Africa's position to the G-20 Summit held in London on 2 April 2009.

#### **2.6 The 13<sup>th</sup> African Union Summit and the Joint Meeting of Ministers for Agriculture and Ministers for Land held in Addis Ababa on 23 and 24 April 2009 .**

The theme of the of 13<sup>th</sup> African Union Heads of State and Government summit held in Sirte, Libya from 1<sup>st</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> July was “*Investing in Agriculture for Economic Growth and Food Security*”. The Summit was preceded by meetings of technical experts and Ministers for Agriculture that were held on 23 and 24 April 2009 respectively in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The meetings, inter alia, reviewed various background documents prepared by members of the AFSRD Cluster on the four thematic areas identified by the NEPAD Secretariat and the African Union (Climate Change – Challenges and Opportunities; Agricultural Trade and Market Integration; Financing African Agriculture; and Inclusion of the Poor and Most Vulnerable). Subsequently, at the request of NEPAD and AUC, FAO prepared a synthesis paper based on the four thematic papers and its own experience to serve as the main background technical paper for the Summit. The paper was finalized integrating comments received by members of the International Technical Committee (ITC) that was established by the African Union and NEPAD Secretariat and other members of the CAADP Partnership Platform. The key members of the ITC included four members of the AFSRD Cluster: WFP, AfDB, FAO and ECA.

### **2.7 Ad-Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Promoting Agro-Industry and Agribusiness Development in African Countries with Emphasis on Promoting Regional Value Chain Approach , Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 22-24 July 2009**

The meeting was convened by the ECA and the AUC and attended by most cluster members. The aim of the meeting was to discuss a draft report prepared by ECA on Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP) in agro-industry and agribusiness and generating concrete proposals on the framework of action for promoting the development of integrated regional value chains for strategic agricultural commodities.

The meeting recommended specific areas of collaboration between the partner organizations that include UNIDO, FAO, IFAD, AUC, AfDB, and CGIAR, AGRA and selected public and private sector institutions, in promoting agro-industries, agribusiness and regional trade in Africa. The areas include undertaking studies, establishing a forum on promoting the adoption of regional value chain approach, and organizing a regional consultative conference on agribusiness and agro-industry by the second quarter of 2010 with the view to popularizing and building consensus and coalition for promoting regional value chain approach. It was also agreed that successful cases such as fish processing on Lake Victoria and the horticulture PPP in Kenya, and failure cases which FAO is currently documenting should be highlighted in its report in order to draw lessons for PPPs and value chain development in Africa.

FAO is also collaborating with UNIDO and other cluster members in the organization of the Agribusiness and Agro-industry Conference that will be held in March 2010 in Abuja, Nigeria.

### **2.8 Sustainable Modernization of Agriculture and Rural Transformation (SMART)**

ECA in collaboration with FAO and UNIDO has taken lead and made progress in the Development Account of the Sustainable Modernization of Agriculture and Rural Transformation (SMART) project which aims to enhance the knowledge and the capacity of African member countries to formulate and implement appropriate programmes. In this respect, SMART best practices for selected African strategic commodities were assessed in West Africa, Central Africa and southern Africa using the value chain approach. Commodities in focus for the assessment were cassava in Nigeria, rice and tomato in Senegal, milk in South Africa, palm oil and banana plantain in Cameroon and maize in Malawi. Best practices on maize, milk and rice were also assessed in East Africa.

## **2.9 Enhancing Market Access for Small-Holder Farmers:**

WFP in partnership with FAO and other development partners is leveraging local food procurement capacity to enhance productivity of small-holder and low-income farmers and boost rural development and livelihoods through enhancing market access for local agricultural produce by, *inter alia*, buying food aid directly from the farmers' cooperatives or engaging in forward contracting. The programme is for initial five years, since 2008, and it is being implemented in the context of CAADP Pillar II on a pilot basis in some fifteen African countries (Burkina Faso, DRC, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia).

## **3. CAADP Partnership Platform and GDPRD CAADP/TT**

Many of the AFSRD Cluster members continue to be actively engaged in the CAADP Partnership Platform (CAADP/PP) meetings that are organized twice a year. The first meeting for this year, and which represents the 4<sup>th</sup> since the process started, took place on 26-27 March 2009 Pretoria, South Africa and the second will be taking from 9 to 12 November 2009 in Abuja, Nigeria. FAO, IFAD and the World Bank are also active members of the CAADP Task Team (CAADP/TT) of the Global Donor Platform on Rural Development (GDPRD) which strives to coordinate the support of all development partners to the CAADP agenda as we move into implementation. In this context these institutions regularly attend the meetings and video/tele conferences organized by the CAADP/TT Secretariat.

## **4. Conclusion**

Activities implemented with the collaboration of two or more members of the AFSRDC Cluster are many and varied. However, given that the CAADP agenda to which the Cluster is directly associated has a work plan and activities that the Cluster members support directly either as individual agencies or as a group, it has proved difficult to identify and organize these active in what can be termed as "cluster work plan". It is even more difficult if one would try to answer the questions posed by the Executive Secretary of ECA at the 9<sup>th</sup> RCM if the activities reported would have not been implemented if the RCM did not exist.

The prevalence of many other parallel coordination mechanisms and ad-hoc arrangements in support of AU/NEPAD activities, in which most Cluster members are active players, has inadvertently rendered attendance of cluster meetings secondary and the implementation of RCM and cluster recommendations slow. However, the Cluster should find a way to make its role more effective by identifying strategic activities in which the UN system would have a comparative advantage in supporting the food security and agriculture development agenda of NEPAD and the African Union. In this regard the Cluster meeting that was held on 4 November 2009 to adopt its report recommended that the Cluster:

- should meet once a year on the occasion of the RCM meeting, but continue to exchange information on regular basis via tele/video conferences and emails;
- takes advantage of summits, conferences and other big meetings which involve participation of cluster members to organize side meetings to discuss Cluster issues;

- urges ECA to bring the issues of resource constraints for effective cluster activities to the attention of Heads of Agencies through the Chief Executives Board (CEB) to allocate resources for Cluster and RCM activities;
- focuses on information exchange rather than preparing and implementing annual Cluster work plans, given that many members are already actively supporting the NEPAD/AUC food security and agriculture development agenda in the context of CADDP and its work plans; and
- annual reports continue to comprise activities implemented through the collaboration of two or more members of the AFSRD Cluster.